THE
Weſtminſter BUBBLE.
A
Merry TALE.
IN A
DIALOGUE
Between an

Old Bridge and a *New.*

By a WATER POET.

Nunc aut nunquam.

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THE *Weſtminſter* BUBBLE.

A Merry TALE.

GOOD People draw near,
And a *Tale* you ſhall hear,
A *Tale* both merry and true:
Pray mark whilſt I tell,
How a *Quarrel* befel,
Between an *Old Bridge* and a *New*.

Should

Should I mention the whole,
It would lengthen my Scrole,
And therefore to make my *Tale* ſhort;
A *Bridge* was Projected,
And in haſte was Erected,
Near the Place where the *Members* reſort.

Now this was the Caſe,
It ſo came to paſs,
That for want of a ſolid Foundation;
By the Force of a Storm,
As ſome Authors inform,
This *Bridge* was tore up from its Station.

When it fell, *O ye Gods!*
'Twas Ten to One Odds,
But the *Tide* had o'erflow'd the whole Place;
Yet I hear of no Harm,
Unleſs the Alarm
Unhappily frighten'd his GRACE.

When the *Watermen* ſaw,
It began to withdraw,
The *Devil* go with you, cry'd they;
And the *Stream* running ſwift,
It ſoon got a-drift,
And away it made towards the Sea.

And here 'tis worth noting,
It ſtill kept on floating,
Till it came to the *Bridge built with Stone*;
And there, as they ſay,
It happen'd to ſtay,
As you ſhall hear further anon.

When the *Old Bridge* obſerv'd,
How the *New One* was ſerv'd,
And lay beating againſt her withall:
She cries out aloud,
Tho' you late was ſo proud,
I find you have now got a Fall,

You silly young *Bubble*,
To insult you in Trouble,
Is a Thing I scorn and despise;
Yet so vile a *Machine*,
I think was ne'er seen,
Projected by Men that were Wise.

But when the *Projectors*,
Are *Bullies* and *Hectors*,
Supported by ignorant *Tools*;
'Tis no Wonder to see,
An *Engine* like Thee,
Invented to pleasure the *Fools*.

There's nothing in Nature,
Poor impotent Creature,
Can support thee 'gainst *Wind* and *Tide*;
Thou art bad at the Bottom,
And that, *the Pox rot 'em*,
Thy *Projectors* ought first to have try'd.

As for me, tho' I'm Old,
I ſtill keep my Hold,
Tho' it *Thunder*, *Lighten* and *Rain*;
If *Tide*, *Wind*, and *Weather*,
Should all joyn together,
I ſhall always unſhaken remain.

When firſt they propos'd ye,
On purpoſe to noſe me,
I was vex'd and ſurpriz'd, I muſt own:
But when I'd Aſſurance,
That ſhort was your Durance,
My *Doubts* and my *Fears* were all gone.

I have Time out of Mind
Been a *Bridge*, you may find,
That ne're had a *Rival* before;
And now for what Reaſon,
I've one at this Seaſon,
I cannot conjecture, I'm ſure.

Had I gave an Offence,
There had been ſome Senſe,
To make *You* a *Tool* to ſupplant me;
But as none has been given,
I'll remember't, by Heaven,
The very firſt Time that you want me.

And depend upon this,
If Things go amiſs,
And your *Projects* miſcarry at laſt;
My Friends will reſent,
And make yours repent
Their Affronts and their Injuries paſt.

For the Uſe of their *Purſes*,
To pay them with Curſes,
And treat them with Paſſion and Scorn;
I think I may ſay,
Is a very odd Way,
And can hardly with Patience be born.

I'd adviſe you take Care,
I have now a LORD MAYOR,
Whoſe *Vaſſal* I am, I confeſs:
His Courage and Senſe,
For me's a ſure Fence,
And the reſt I will leave you to gueſs.

The *Sheriffs* likewiſe,
All *Propoſals* deſpiſe,
When the *Right* of the *City*'s at Stake:
Common-Council-men too,
All good Men and true,
Will heartily joyn for my Sake.

Now, you ſcurvy young *Quean*,
Why, what can you mean,
To give me ſo furious a Knock:
'Tis in vain to diſſemble,
I own I ſtill tremble,
By the Force and the Weight of the Shock.

In the Name of old *Thames*,
The beſt of all *Dames*,
To tell me the Cauſe I conjure you;
How you durſt be ſo rude,
Thus on me to intrude,
For I will know the Cauſe, I'll aſſure you.

New Bridge.

Well then, to be free,
You're a *Bridge*, I'll agree,
Both Beautiful, Ancient, and Strong;
But for all you now ſwagger,
In ſpight of your *Dagger*,
I ſhall be your *Match* e're 'tis long.

You may boaſt of long *Right*,
But you'll get nothing by't,
Tho' your MAYOR and his *Brethren* joyn;
My *Friends* are too great,
For yours to defeat,
And can carry what e're they Deſign.

You have had a long Run,
And yet you'd go on,
With your *Cheat* and *Monopolies* ſtill:
If I am of Uſe,
Pray where's the Abuſe,
Or why ſhould you take it ſo ill?

Old Bridge.

Is this your Pretenſion,
Poor *Wooden Invention*,
I'd have you be better advis'd:
I have an old *Charter*,
Will ſecure me hereafter,
When you'll be contemn'd and deſpis'd.

If you injure old *London*,
You'll quickly be Undone,
As you'll by the Conſequence find.
Come *Upſtart*, perhaps,
There may come After-claps,
Then you ſhall know more of my Mind.

New Bridge.

I'll tell you old *Dame*,
You'll find you're to blame,
If you do not ſit ſtill and obey:
All *Right*'s at an End,
I ſpeak't as a Friend,
Where POWER and INTEREST ſway.

Your *City Pretences*,
Are but impotent Fences,
Almoſt worn out and forgot:
My *Friends*, this is true,
Will begin all a-new,
And then you will ſee, you *old Sot*.

If the Ground be miſtaken,
Muſt I be forſaken,
And ſhall that deſtroy the *Deſign*:
I'll be very plain,
If there's Proſpect of GAIN,
This will end in *Your Ruin* or *Mine*.

When

When the *Ball* is once up,
My *Friends* will not ſtop
At any Thing that's in their Way:
They'll find out the Means
To Drain, even the *Thames*,
And now pray mark what I ſay:

Things almoſt as ſtrange,
Have been done on your *Change*,
Within the Remembrance of Man:
On a certain Occaſion,
Ha'n't they *Drain'd* a whole Nation,
Now pray deny this if you can.

Wer't thou worth their Trouble,
Thou ſilly old Bubble,
They quickly wou'd humble thy *Pride*:
Where there's GAIN in the Way,
I'll venture to ſay,
They'd alter the Courſe of the *Tide*.

Your

Your *Friends* may fall *Martyrs*,
To their *Rights* and their *Charters*,
And at length loſe their *Markets* and *Fairs*:
To pull thy *Pride* down,
They'd build a new *Town*,
And make all the CITY *Lord-Mayors*.

Come, come, let's agree,
For, betwixt you and me,
Whilſt we wrangle and make ſuch a pother,
We ſhall bring an ill Name,
Upon old *Mother Thame*,
And perhaps deſtroy one another.

Old Bridge.

Why, *Upſtart*, you prate,
And talk at a Rate,
As if that your Buſineſs was done;
But pray not ſo faſt,
You'll find at the laſt,
More Words to this *Bargain* than One.

If the *Trade* we enjoy'd,
By you be deſtroy'd,
And the *City* made poorer and poorer:
Or if they *Drain* on,
As they lately have done,
That *we're* ruin'd there's nothing is ſurer.

But for breaking all *Bounds*,
And Building new *Towns*,
And deſtroying the *Markets* and *Fairs*;
For all they're ſo *Brave*,
And Bully and *Rave*,
Your Friends may attempt if they dare.

New Bridge.

If you dare! Very well,
Why then you'd *Rebel*;
If you do, 'tis not the firſt Time:
You have often oppos'd,
Inſulted and nos'd,
The *Prince* and the *Court* without Crime.

But mark what I ſay,
If your old *Game* you play,
All Things are ſo chang'd for the beſt;
That all your Pretence,
Among Men of Senſe,
Is look'd upon now as a Jeſt.

For my Part I know,
The moſt you can do
Cannot circumvent me one Hour:
You may *Bluſter* and *Huff*,
And talk your old Stuff,
But depend I am out of your *Power*.

You may wheedle the *Rabble*,
With impertinent Squabble,
And ſet forth your *Charter* and *Right*;
And when you have done,
My Friends will go on,
And at length you'll get nothing by't.

For what Reaſon, I wonder,
Muſt I be kept under,
Whilſt you command the whole *Town*:
Poor Weſtminſter *City*,
Stands an Object of Pity,
That erſt was ſo much in Renown.

I'll tell you in ſhort,
You may thank your ſelf for't,
If provok'd by your *Pride* and *Diſdain*;
An *Enquiry* be made,
In your Manner of *Trade*,
And why you ſome *Cuſtoms* maintain.

On the whole I am ſure,
You had better endure
All the *Damages* you can propoſe;
Than ſtir up a Matter,
Which doubtleſs hereafter,
Will make the whole *Kingdom* your Foes.

Old Bridge.

Why, Bubble, ſhall I,
With Patience ſtand by,
Whilſt you and your *Agents* ſupplant me:
'Tis Matter of GAIN,
Urges me to complain,
And that's a good Motive you'll grant me.

All my *Friends* would condemn me,
Deſpiſe and contemn me,
And think me below their Aſſiſtance,
If I did not endeavour,
Both now and for ever,
To make you the utmoſt Reſiſtance.

Your *Threats* and your *Lies*,
I ſcorn and deſpiſe,
I have *Truth* and *Right* on my Side:
If your *Pow'r* be ſo great,
You them both can defeat,
The better, the ſooner 'tis try'd.

As I don't want your Aid,
So I am not afraid,
Of you, your *Agents*, or *Friends* :
Shou'd they do me Wrong,
It wou'd not be long,
Before they muſt make me amends.

New Bridge.

Why you talk like a *Cit*,
Without Fear or Wit,
And haughtily boaſt of your *Right* ;
But ſtill, by the Way,
I don't hear you ſay,
That at firſt you came honeſtly by't.

What if a *Committee*,
Should ſend to the *City*,
For *Records*, *Perſons*, and *Papers* ;
I preſume your LORD MAYOR,
To refuſe them won't dare,
For all your great *Brags*, and your *Vapours*.

And what if you want,
Some *Clauſe* in your *Grant*,
By which your *Title* is void:
If this ſhould be ſo,
If you pleaſe let me know,
Why your *Charter* may not be deſtroy'd.

For your Neighbour the BURROUGH,
She'll find to her Sorrow,
Her *Folly*, *Malice*, *and Pride*,
Has raiſs'd her ſuch *Foes*,
'Mongſt the YEAS and the NOES,
Not a Mortal will be on her Side.

My *Friends*, you old *Dunce*,
Would have courted you once,
And granted you all your *Demands*;
But that Time is o'er,
And now the whole *Power*,
Is ſafely repos'd in their Hands.

Old Bridge.

If this be the *Game*,
Then farewel the *Fame*,
And th'ancient *Rights of the City:*
Her *Beauty* and *Strength*,
Muſt dwindle at length,
And I ſtand an Object of Pity.

As the *Travellers* paſs,
They will ſay, this *Bridge* was
The nobleſt *Inlet* to a *Town*,
Whoſe *Wealth* and whoſe *Glory*,
Shine brighteſt in *Story*,
But now ſhe has loſt her *Renown.*

Her *Rights* are *Encroach'd*,
And ſhe's grown ſo *Debauch'd*,
So exceedingly *Leud* and *Deprav'd*;
That the *Country* all round her,
Deſpiſe and confound her,
And judge her unfit to be ſav'd.

This, *Strangers* will ſay,
And indeed well they may;
For who can without Deteſtation,
See a *City* oppreſs'd,
Made a Scorn and a Jeſt,
Has ſo long been the Prop of the *Nation*.

To promote her *Declenſion*,
There's a *Wooden Invention*,
Projected to finiſh her *Ruin*;
'Tis a Scandal and Shame,
I ſtart at the Name,
Why, what are the *Britons* a doing?

New Bridge.

But what of all this,
You take Things amiſs,
And furiouſly *Bellow* and *Rave*;
But no *Reaſons* give,
As I can conceive,
To ſhew any *Merits* you have.

'Tis

'Tis a Shame and a Pity,
So noble a *City*,
By ſuch a fine *River* attended;
At ev'ry chief *Place*,
Where the *People* muſt paſs,
Should not with a *Bridge* be befriended.

'Tis hard you muſt own,
That the beſt Part o'th' *Town*,
Should ſo long be depriv'd of a *Thing*,
Would add to their *Pleaſure*,
Their *Grandeur* and *Treaſure*,
And accommodate even the *King*.

When they come from the *Downs*,
Or from following their *Hounds*,
Who without Indignation can view?
The *Gentlemen* ſtand,
With their *Horſes* in Hand,
Half an Hour, or more, this is true.

And don't it look merry,
To ſee at the *Ferry*,
Dukes, *Lords*, and *Knights* with their *Train*
Stand ſhiv'ring i'th' Cold,
Swear, *Bluſter*, and *Scold*,
Till the *Boat* can come over again?

And this, as they ſay,
Happens oft in a Day,
And can have no Remedy found;
Unleſs to paſs you,
O're the Stones they ſhould go,
At leaſt a League or two round.

Now if I give Content,
And this can prevent,
And many more Miſchiefs withal;
Why ſhou'd you repine,
Snarl, Grumble, and Whine,
And ſeem ſo o'erjoy'd at my Fall.

Tho' I'm not ſo Strong
As you, yet as long
As *Wood* and *Stone*'s to be got;
No coſt will be ſpar'd,
Till I am *Repair'd*,
And that you will find, you *Old Sot*.

Tho' the *Bargemen* do Bawl,
And the *Boatmen*, and all
The *Wretches* that live on the *Water*:
They may *Murmur* and *Yelp*,
And cry out for Help,
But alas, they know nothing o'th' Matter.

Now can you ſuppoſe,
Such *Abettors* as thoſe,
Can cauſe me, at laſt to miſcarry:
You may firmly depend,
I'll be fix'd in the End,
Tho' perhaps ſomething longer I tarry.

All the *Town* round the *Court*,
Where the *Great Ones* reſort,
And the *Nobles* and *Gentry* reſide;
Seem mightily pleas'd,
By me to be eas'd,
And their *Markets* be better ſupply'd.

And now, to conclude,
For I wou'd not be rude,
Let Matters ſtand as they do:
To leave off *Debating*,
All *Wrangling* and *Prating*,
Will be better for me, and for You.

Old Bridge.

Such Pretences as theſe,
Your *Projectors* may pleaſe,
And kindle and ſtir up Commotions;
But weigh them aright,
They'll appear very light
More empty Chymerical Notions.

For theſe thouſand long Years,
As it plainly appears,
I have no *Competitor* had;
And why I ſhould now:
I don't know, I vow;
think all the *Nation's run mad.*

New *Projectors* and *Schemes*,
Have brought Things to Extreams,
And utterly *Ruin'd* all *Trade*;
And to finiſh the Matter,
A Bridge croſs the Water,
To *Ruine* me too, muſt be made.

The *Docks* and the *Keys*,
Are deſtroy'd ſev'ral Ways,
And even the *Royal Exchange*,
Will in Time be undone,
If theſe *Projects* go on;
Next Age, this will look very Strange,

All the Reaſons you mention,
Are merely Invention,
To amuſe and bubble the *Town*:
Dull ignorant Stuff,
To ſet your *Sham* off,
And make your new *Project* go down.

When your *Friends* wanted Money,
Oh! then 'twas my *Honey*,
But now 'tis, We will, 'cauſe we will:
Strange Turn of Affairs!
And to add to our Cares,
All Matters grow worſe and worſe ſtill.

The *Great Ones* you boaſt on,
You may e'en make your moſt on,
Only this I for once wou'd adviſe you:
Take Care in the End,
What e'er they pretend,
That they do not *deceive* and *deſpiſe* you.

The other ad-reply'd,
But the Turn of the *Tide*
Put a final End to the *Matter*;
For the *Stream* running ſtronger,
She could there ſtay no longer,
And ſo ſhe turns back with the *Water*.

What happen'd hereafter,
Will be Subject of Laughter,
But for me to ſay more would be rude:
At ſome other Time,
When *Truth* is no Crime,
This TALE may perhaps be purſu'd.

FINIS.

The other'ad reply'd,
But the Turn of the *Tide*
Put a final End to the *Matter*;
For the *Stream* running stronger,
She could there stay no longer,
And so she turns back with the *Water*.

What happen'd hereafter,
Will be Subject of Laughter,
But for me to say there would be rude:
At some other Time,
When *Truth* is no Crime,
This TALE may perhaps be pursu'd.

FINIS.